

REMARKS

The abstract has been amended and is now believed to overcome the examiner's objection.

The examiner has rejected claims 1, 3-25 and 27-28 as either being anticipated by the L'Allier et al. or as being unpatentable over the L'Allier in view of Cook or L'Allier in view of Judd. Applicants, by and through the undersigned, have enclosed a Declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131 to remove L'Allier as prior art to the present application. The Declaration clearly establishes completion of the claimed invention well prior to the effective date of the L'Allier patent. More particularly, the Declaration establishes completion of the invention at least by November 23, 1999 which is nearly one year prior to the filing date of November 2, 2000, of the L'Allier application which issued as the '480 patent.

In applicants' response to the prior office action, applicants clearly established that the Cook patent does not anticipate, teach or suggest the claims of the present application. Because the L'Allier patent is not prior art to the present invention and because Cook fails to anticipate, teach or suggest the claims as amended in Amendment A, applicants respectfully request the rejections be withdrawn, the claims be allowed and the patent to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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